

**UNIVERSITY OF DENVER**

## **COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO NATURAL DISASTER**

- I. Learning Objectives
- A. Students will acquire an introduction to current social science research pertaining to the sociological aspects of natural disaster.
  - B. Students will gain an increased understanding of how such specialized empirical research studies can be related to more general theoretical principles.
  - C. Students will develop an increased awareness of the potentials and difficulties in using social science research as a basis for modifying public policy.

- II. Core Text Books
- A. Lindell, Michael K. and Ronald W. Perry. *Behavioral Foundations of Community Emergency Planning*. Washington, D.C.: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, 1992.
  - B. Burton, Ian, Rabat W. Kates, and Gilbert F. White. *The Environment As Hazard* (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford Publishers, Inc., 1993.

III. Outline of Topics

March 21 - Why Study Disaster?

- A. Review course objectives, learning strategies, and evaluations.
- B. Review bibliography.
- C. Procedures for field trips.
- D. Policy applications examples: *Report on Flood Hazard Mitigation; International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction*.

March 23 - Natural Disasters and Social Science Research: A Brief History

**Reading:** Lindell and Perry, pp. 1-25; Thomas E. Drabek, "A History of Sociological Research on Disaster," pp. 9-22 in *Proceedings of the States - Former Soviet Union Seminar on Social Science Research on Mitigation for and Recovery from Disasters and Large Scale Hazards* (Vol. 1: *The American Participation*), E. L. Quarantelli and Konstantin Popov, eds., Disaster Research Center, University of Delaware: Newark Delaware, 1993 (copies provided).  
Video: "A Lady Named Camile"

- March 28 - Disaster Warnings As Social Processes: Hurricane Carla (1962); Denver flood (1965); Rapid City flood (1972); Big Thompson Canyon flood (1976); Texas Hill Country flood (1978); Hurricane Frederic (1979); Mount St. Helens (1980); Abilene flood (1981); Denver nitric acid spill (1983); Hurricanes Hugo (1989), Andrew (1992) and Iniki (1992).  
**Reading:** Burton, Kates and White, pp. 1-30. Thomas E. Drabek, "Shall We Leave?" *Emergency Management Review* 1 (October, 1983):25-29. (copies provided)
- March 30 - Family Evacuation: What Works and Why?  
**Reading:** Burton, Kates, and White, pp. 31-65. Lindell and Perry, pp. 27-51.
- April 4 - Altruism, Heroes, and the Therapeutic Community  
**Reading:** Lindell and Perry, pp. 53-113.
- April 6 - Myths about Disaster Responses  
**Reading:** Lindell and Perry, pp. 115-145.  
 Videos: Terrible Tuesday and Hurricane Hugo.
- April 11 - The Emergence of Ephemeral Institutions  
**Reading:** Lindell and Perry, pp. 147-181.
- April 13 - Emergent Multiorganizational Networks  
 Video: "PSA Crash"  
**Reading:** Lindell and Perry, pp. 183-214.
- April 18 - Developing Local Emergency Management Programs  
**Reading:** Lindell and Perry, pp. 215-247.
- April 20 - Simulations As Multiorganizational Planning Tools  
 Film: "Date With Disaster"  
**Reading:** Lindell and Perry, pp. 249-275.
- April 25 - Long-term Impacts of Disaster.  
**Reading:** Burton, Kates, and White, pp. 66-94.  
 Case study student reports
- April 27 - Hazards, Response, and Choice  
**Reading:** Burton, Kates, and White, pp. 95-163.  
 Distribute mid-term examination (take-home essay)  
 Case study student reports  
 Case study analysis reports due - in class.
- May 2 - Hazard Perceptions and Mitigation Strategies  
**Reading:** Burton, Kates, and White, pp. 164-185.

- May 4 - Mitigation Strategies: Philosophy, Politics, and Problems  
Videos: Galveston Island and Rim of Fire  
Mid-term exam due - in class.
- May 9 - American Red Cross: History, Responsibility and Operations  
Field Trip: Mile High Chapter, American Red Cross (tentative)  
**Reading:** Burton, Kates, and White, pp. 186-218.
- May 11 - Local Civil Defense: Coordination and Planning  
Field Trip: Denver Civil Defense Emergency Operations Center (tentative)  
**Reading:** Burton, Kates, and White, pp. 219-263.
- May 16 - State Level Preparations: The Governor and Local Communities  
Field Trip: Camp George West Emergency Operations Center (tentative)
- May 18 - Presidential Declarations and Coordination of Federal Responses  
Field Trip: Federal Emergency Management Agency (tentative)
- May 23 - Social Science Research and Public Policy  
Field trip reaction reports due - in class  
Discussion: Field Trips
- May 25 - The Future of Disaster Research and Emergency Management  
Discussion: Readings and Field Trips  
Course evaluations

#### IV. Modes of Evaluation

- A. Class Discussion - 10%
- B. Mid-Term Examination (take-home essay) - 30%
- C. Case Study Analysis (see below) - 25%
- D. Oral Summary of Case Study - 5%
- E. Field Trip Reaction Report (see below) - 30%

V. Disaster Case Study Analysis

Select a disaster case study published by a social scientist and prepare a written analysis that does not exceed the equivalent of 4 typewritten pages (double spaced). Use all of the following sub-titles:

- A. Book citation (use ASA format)
- B. Credentials of author (degrees, positions, previous publications)
- C. Summary of event and locale
- D. What research methods were used?
- E. What are the major social science conclusions reached by the author?
- F. What aspects of this study confirm findings presented in the Drabek inventory (be specific)?
- G. What aspects of this study are inconsistent with findings presented in the Drabek inventory (be specific)?
- H. What public policy issues are relevant to this study?

VI. Field Trip Reaction Report (FTRR)

Students will submit a FTRR covering all trips.

For each trip summary comments will be written in accordance with the following format:

- A. Length—approximately 2 pages for each trip.
- B. Questions—As a student of the social sciences, list a minimum of 4 questions you would like to ask. These are to be written *prior* to the trip.
- C. Record your reactions and comments in this format:
  1. Agency name
  2. Speaker
  3. Questions (those you wish to ask *and* those you did ask *plus* answer given)
  4. Reactions:
    - a) What did you learn about human responses (victims, agency personnel, the public at large)?
    - b) What did you learn about social policy (agency roles, governmental rules and laws)?
    - c) What did you learn about research application efforts?
    - d) What was the *single* most important new piece of information you learned?

VII. Late paper policy: It is assumed that all papers will be submitted in class on the date due. One point will be deducted from the grade assigned each day beyond the due date.